

KAZ HAYASHI! and KOJI KANEMOTO! go buckwild. YUMIKO HOTTA! doesn't play that lucha stuff with ESTER MORENO! RIC FLAIR! and JUMBO TSURUTA! go wild in Japan! And other stuff!

ALOHA~!

WELCOME TO THE DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #80!

This is the Almost Back To School Giant Sunscreen Testing Beach Novel DVDVR! LOVE IT! PRINNITOUT CUZ... IT's BIG! Well, the hits keep rolling in as a wild flurry of tapes are being mailed around to everyone on Earth and many of them landing in the hands of assorted swank and studly Death Valley Playboys. The evermackin' Chris clocks in with the Super Junior stuff that was great and harrowing in it's scope. The backlog of TOTAL SWANKNESS continues as the ever elusive and everstudboltliest GLENN added yet still even more to his Canon of Righteousness as he delivered the OZ Academy Special and I think we're all gonna have a first blood match to see who gets first shot at it- in addition to the other Wads of grappling beauty that he is wont to deliver out of the sheer philanthropy of his heart. Lorefice, who between writing the exhaustively comprehensive QUEBRADA!!- wasn't afraid keep a steady stream of wrestling flowing into the Death Valley Coffers and I'm FINALLY getting around to reviewing more of the truly AWESOME 80's AJW that he graciously sent a while ago. Dig it as we continue in our little fanclub of wrestling that doesn't suck and first here's a word from the action-packed Phil Schneider.....

@#@#@#@#@#NEW JAPAN TOP OF THE SUPER JUNIORS 1998 TV MATCHES.
(ByPHIL SCHNEIDER)

Felino vs Shiryu:

I was majorly psyched for this match as Shiryu is one of my favorites and-despite a half a dozen 4 minute WCW matches (including one with Ultimo against the Armstrongs which rocked the house) and two or three Promo Azteca matches, he has been MIA from my TV for over a year. He comes to the ring with the Shiryu mask but removes it before the match starts, Felino sports the legalized dope half purple, half black mask. This match was a lot less Lucha then I would have thought, as both guys tried to do a flyer powerbomb variation. Shiryu busted out the ode to Onita Thunder Fire Bomb, but Felino comes out on top, with his He-Wore-A-Cat-Suit-Too Black Tiger Bomb. Shiryu also does a great Rey Jr-flying hurricanrana into a roll up. Shiryu gets the win with a choice but slightly sloppy Dragon Suplex into a Crippler Crossface.

Jushin Liger vs Tatsuhito Takaiwa:

Started out really choice with, Takaiwa and Liger doing counters out of a headlock, and a front body scissors (like the set up for a powerbomb). Tatsuhito also hit a boss Death Valley Bomb, and his multiple powerbombs into a Liger Bomb. Liger responded with a super stiff shotay and a kappo kick, plus the world beating, top rope fisherman's buster. However it denigrated in to the ultimate New Japan Heavyweight ending, as both guys did the old stand and dare bullcrap with

Takaiwa hitting a big lariat for his first win over Liger. I hate that hit-me-with-your-best-shot shit, and while it was funny when El Samurai and Takiawa did the ode to Kensuke Sasaki match in last years Airforce Wars I don't want this to become a pattern.

Shinjiro Ohtani vs Masakazu Fukuda:

Ohtani takes Fukada by the hand and leads him through a pretty dope match. Fukada is from Social Progress, MOBIUS, Fujiwaragumi, Tokyo Pro, Yume Factory, Doglegs, Shin FMW or one of those other tiny little promotions that dot Tokyo like zits on Brakkus's back. He has no muscle tone in his arms and looked totally lost for the first couple of minutes that was aired. Ohtani loads up the tree of woe face scrape with the bonus running face scrape, plus a springboard dropkick square in the face. Fukada gets in a big bunch of offense though, hitting a couple of nice chokeslams, and (after the little I'll place-you-on-the top-rope-and-you-knock- me -down-and-I-fight back shtick, which was cool when Ohtani and Ultimo did it in 1996 but is real old now) a kingsize top rope urange. Ohtani calls it a night with a spin kick and a dragon suplex, but it was a neat little match, especially for someone as apparently limited as Fukuda.

Koji Kanemoto vs Kendo Ka Shin:

I dug this a bunch as Koji is in full obnoxious cocksucker mode as he spits right in Ka Shin's face and slaps him around like a little ho. Ka Shin amazingly only does one cross armbreaker, and does the mega-choice worlds fastest rolling kneebar. Kanemoto takes the big bump as he does the pescada to nowhere. The ending was great too as Koji uses his leg to block two lowblow attempts and does a great spinning back kick to the head and hits a Tiger Suplex. Radical match, get this badboy.

Koji Kanemoto vs Dr. Wagner Jr.:

The insanely surgent Dr. Wagner Jr. busts out another gem as he takes Koji out of Budokan and drops him smack in the middle of Arena Coliseo. Wagner slaps Koji in every elaborate Lucha Libre submission hold he knows, Gory Special, the Hammerlock with leg around the neck Mexican Ceiling Hold and the Rocking Cradle which is in the top ten most preposterous submission holds ever and is a thing of beauty to behold. Koji and the Doctor slap the taste out of each others mouths. Koji hits his kicks and a nasty twisting senton where he lands the totality of his weight right on Doc's midsection. Koji sold for most of this match as Wagner moves from Lucha submission to Japanese powerbombs, hitting a Tiger Driver, Black Tiger Bomb and a superfly Top Rope Splash Mountain. Wagner hits two Michinoku Drivers, but can't put Koji away. Kanemoto fights back with some stiff kicks and hits his moonsault, picks Wagner up and hits a Tiger Suplex for the win. Great match, with tons of heat and great movement. Didn't have as many "HOLY SHIT" spots as last years final, but the psychology was a little more solid. I like the fact that Doc Wagner got a ton of offense but I don't think Koji should have kicked out of two of his Michinoku Drivers, that is a consistent flaw with most New Japan juniors matches, i.e. their finishers never finish a match. A small quibble in what was definitely a must see match. GET YO HANDS ON THIS!!

!@!@!@!@!@!@!NEW JAPAN TOP OF THE SUPER JUNIORS 1998 COMMERCIAL TAPE.
VOL 1. And 2.
(By DEAN RASMUSSEN)

This is everything you don't get on New Japan TV- so you really gotta hustle to find all the matches in their entirety. Maybe they show them all on Samurai next to all the Kido and Goto matches. I'll check. Some of these are clipped but usually not as butchered as what they show on NJ TV so this is your best bet for total Hot Juniors Action.

Koji Kanemoto vs Yuji Yasuraoka:

Koji is gonna be putting over the very talented little fella from WAR so Koji beats the living hell out of the former owner of the worst hair in all of wrestledom. I think this is the match where Koji broke Yuji's jaw and the beating is so hideous that I kept going "that's where he broke it... no.. THAT'S where he broke it...no..." and so on. Yuji mounts a decent comeback after the initial total pummeling which is topped off with a Yasuraoka German Suplex directly on Kanemoto's neck. Yuji kicks out of Rolling Spinning Moonsault Senton Thing with the added Fabulous Kanemoto Moonsault and WARboy lands his own perfect dropkick right to the left eye of Kanemoto that he follows up the WAR via Ultimo Dragon Signature Running Up the Ropes To Hit Something Dropkick. Koji gets fed up with the WAR signature moves and goes for the Tiger Suplex. Yuji reverses it into a roll-up and gets the surprise pin. They hug and stuff at the end. Something about the TOSJ that brings out the huggy, cuddly side of Kanemoto- as you recall him hugging Doc Dean after beating the holy shit out of him last year. Painful, hurty match and Yuji looked good despite the broken jaw and I'm glad he's hanging around New Japan and I hope he challenges Juventud or Rey for the Cruiserweight title like he did last year and I hope he stays longer because I think he's really tops.

(Tim's Really Beautiful NJ Figurine that he got from Mike Bochichio says on the box) Jushyin "Thunder" Lyger vs Masakazu Fukuda:

Fukuda of aforementioned BattlARSIONyumeDOGLEGSfactoryGUMI fame is really good for a young punk. The best wrestler in the world says, "Take it to the mat, ya punk. Show me whatcha got." Fukuda says, "You got it, sir. Uh... Sir.... You're really gonna kick my ass, aren't you?" "Ooooooh Yeah, by the end, you're gonna wish I still had a weird fascination with Motegi." "AH CRAP!." Anyhoos, they take it to the mat and Lyger rules the MotherFuckin World 48-14, so the fact that Fukuda keeps up with him and does nice counters and does nice Pro Style submissions helps a whole bunch in making the first part of what is basically a really extended education match from getting into the realm of a Basic Education Match. GOLLY! Lyger hits Fukuda with a shotay that knocks the punk right off his pins. This kid can sell it like a man and his offense is solid, but I need to see him against Less Than Liger And Ohtani since Liger does a Hikari Fukuoka-level of making the youngster look really great before killing the little spinach-chin with a SUPER nasty looking Toprope Northern Lights Bomb. God, I think I'd rather pull my own wisdom teeth than go through that particular finisher. Lyger Rules The WORLD.

Shinjiro Ohtani vs El Samurai:

Well THIS was way more fun than exactly GOOD. It was very much nine Nitro Cruiserweight matches rolled into one, with the singular exception that WCW Cruiserweights tend to sell their opponents finisher as a finisher and this was finisher after finisher after finisher after finisher after finisher. Not good as match because of TOTAL lack of selling or psychology but entertaining as a Whitman's sampler of current New Japan finishers- STATUS CURRENTLY: Toperope Reverse DDT- Not enough to finish opponent/ simple Dragon Suplex- Plenty enough. Go figure.

El Samurai vs Tatsuhito Takaiwa:

Too cut up to be a real representation of the match, it does show that three endless powerbombs into a Death Valley Bomb won't beat you, nor will a toprope reverse DDT.... BUT a Reverse Tornado DDT will get you the duke. Thus ends RASMUSSEN's foray into being surprised by NJ Junior's lack of selling as if he hadn't seen 7,000 hours of the very same thing before. Yes. Thank you. Yes. Thank you.

Kaz Hayashi vs Kendo Ka Shin:

Oh YEAH! Here we go. This match frickin RULED! They start by punching each other in the face a whole bunch until Kaz hits a big rolling elbow and knocks him out of the ring and KaShin holds up a chair to bust up our boy Kaz's PHAT ASS tope. Kendo busts him up with a chair a little more. Kaz hits his first offensive transition by doing the Murdock toprope leg wrangler takeover and hits his WAR signature move second rope reverse Quebrada to the floor... oh wait... uh.... drags him into ring and does the really great Hayashi Dragon Suplex into a Crippler Crossface (BOY! Canadaboy is gonna be PISSED. Me Want Tape!) but Ka Shin gets to the ropes. After Ka Shin is a TOTAL dick and foules Kaz while on the top turnbuckle, Kaz hits the incredibly GREAT Crucifix into a Crippler Crossface (BOY! Horsemenboy is gonna be PISSED! Me Want Tape!) Kendo hits the ropes. After hitting a SU-WANK toprope rana into a rollup, Kaz counters an elaborate Ka Shin Cross Armbreaker combo into La Majistral for the win. (BOY! Ultimo Dragon and El Dandy are gonna be PISSED! Me Want Tape!) This match fucking ruled. When did Shiryu go from great little rudo to cool as living heck Junior heavyweight superstud? I'm digging it.

Takaiwa vs Ohtani:

180 from the El Samurai Finishes-to-the-Finishes-athon, our man Shinjiro says, "Let's take the move-developmentally stunted, primed for no-selling in the NJ HWT's Takaiwa and have a really GOOD match." And it is good, though Takaiwa's same set of moves in the same order got old back in February. Ohtani brings the wrestling goodness and he sells all neato in this and he works on Takaiwa's leg and Takaiwa sells it much longer than any New Japan Minor Junior Heavyweight has ever sold a point of psychology, so I dug this. Ohtani can't beat him with his Junior moves and Takaiwa can't beat Ohtani with his Junior moves and that makes up the basic psychology, so Takaiwa goes all Heavyweight and hits a bunch of lariats (Golly. Takaiwa doling out the butt-smooching to the big booker maybe?) and Takaiwa gets the win. Ohtani rules it. Takaiwa is a slightly better version of Manabu Nakanishi at this point. Maybe that's a little harsh...

Dr Wagner vs El Samurai:

Weird way to end the first volume. Totally hacked up version of this match with a couple of roll-ups, a couple a ranas, a La Majistral and Wagner Driver 98. Well. There ya go.

Vol.II

Dr Wagner vs Shinjiro Ohtani:

Doc is wearing the FREAKIN ZEBRA STRIPED MASK so he automatically becomes the swankest wrestler alive. MYOMY is this FUN! They go all to the mat early and Vampiro's favorite wrestler tries to do the Ohtani Corner Face Scrape but misses completely so Shinjiro drags Wagner into the ring and show him how it's done topping it off with the TOTALLY dick-like full drop kick to the face. They go directly into finisherarama but these two have an idea what psychology so it isn't just a cavalcade of big dangerous spots but big spots countered out of, big spots hit and set up by lesser spots, and the ilk. Doc fights out of the Dragon Suplex for most of the match, Shinjiro battles out of the Wagner Driver 98 for the other half of the match so the main psychology is the basic NJ Juniors Race to Deadly Finisher so the viewer knows that whoever gets to theirs first is going over- thus making the eternal kicking out of everything else seem logical. Dr Wagner gets to his first after doing his ode to Takaiwa doing his ode of Chosyu by hitting a myriad of lariats. This was really cool. Dr Wagner is out-Puroresu-ing the guys who wrestle puroresu and that ain't nothing but cool.

Hayato Nanjo vs Kendo Ka Shin:

THANK GOD that Hayato Nanjo cut his fricking hair. He is now just horribly hideous looking as opposed to totally stomach-churning. This match sucked though. There was one cool spot where they do this continuous snapmare for a bunch of times which Ka Shin ends it with reverse DDT. The rest is blown spot after weak spot after random crappiness. To recap: Hayato's hair: shorter, less hideous/ Snapmares: fun, abundant/ Match: bad.

Fukuda vs Takaiwa:

Ah! here's the real test. Takaiwa couldn't carry anyone so NOW we'll see what PioneerPWFspwFDREAMFACTORYboy REALLY has under the hood. HEY NOW! This match was friggin GREAT. Fukuda is now officially the real mutha farkin deal. I think the key is that Fukuda gets these guys out of their style and gets them back on the mat where they can really set up their highspots. This is great, this is exactly the kind of match Takaiwa needs to have everytime; the whole front end is very static with each trading weardown holds and then it explodes into a suplex when Takaiwa finally can counter into it and then it goes back to a static section where Fukuda can get into position to explode into a Brainbuster. This lead to a building array of finishers and dangerous throws with Takaiwa hitting his Death Valley Bomb based offense and Fukuda working to his Toprope Urangle, with both building at a natural progression and set up adequately- for once in a match where Takaiwa is the senoir member. This is the cool variation of dynamics that separates a spotfest from a wrestling match and I like the fact that an untested punk from the Japanese indies can make a 1998 NJ Juniors match make total sense while still highlighting the highpoints of the style like Ohtani, Kanemoto and Lyger can. I dug this match as much as any on this tape.

Shinjiro Ohtani vs Jyushin "Thunder" Lyger:

This was really good- as you can imagine. This is a combo of the Shinjiro/Doc Wagner match and the Fukuda/Takaiwa match. It goes to the mat early in both this and the Wagner match but the stuff on the mat in this is longer and more intense- and in comparison to the Takaiwa-Fukuda match, the static parts to the highspots are less cut and dried because the stuff on the mat is more active and intense- more as somethings unto themselves than a means to an end like the matwork in the Fukuda match. After hitting the mat, they go straight to the duelling corner face scrapes- with Ohtani winning this with an much more extended face stomping section than that which was laid upon Dr Wagner. Post-face scrapes, it becomes the big race to a finisher, as Lyger goes on offense with a Oklahoma Roll into a Running Lyger Bomb. Ohtani reverts to his childhood and starts making the weepy faces we all come to love, but gets back into the drivers seat by reversing Lyger's biggest Killer (Toprope Northern Lights Bomb) and they go into the CrossArmBreaker as Headlock hold. Ohtani kinda REALLY oversells a shotay (over the top rope? Ohtani does his homage to Terry Funk? YIKES!) This takes away from the subtle point of psychology of Lyger selling the CAB as affecting his shotay, which he is doing if you can look away from Kobashitani hamming it up. Oh wait! Maybe you can kick out of a Toprope NLBomb. I didn't know! I need a scorecard perhaps! Dragon into a springboard leg lariat for Ohtani doesn't kill Lyger so we're even, BUT I'M GUESSING HERE. Shotay into Kawada Powerbomb with Postbomb Kawada Sprawl Of Victory To Assure The Pin more than works. Not even close to their really GREAT match from 1997, but still pretty fricking good.

Koji Kanemoto vs Hayato Nanjo:

Kanemoto mardalizes the hell out Hayato Mulkey for seven minutes. The kindhearted Hayato didn't have a good tourney, it appears. Koji seemed unhappy about wrestling someone who has wrestled Ricky Fuji more than once and didn't attempt to sell anything. I'd get upset but Kanemoto is a real dick so I should expect as much. Mercifully short.

Lyger vs El Samurai:

Joined WAY in progress, this isn't much to write home about except Lyger does hit the greatest Toprope Fisherman Suplex that I've ever seen. There's a big dull thud and El kinda lays and says to himself, "AH CRAP! I'm Junior Tourney Death Bump Boy AGAIN!?!?" Whenever you see El getting THIS slaughtered it can only mean ONE thing- El's gonna win it big, fatboys. They are really pushing this Reverse Tornado DDT, and it just doesn't look nearly as cool as a TORNADO DDT.

Kaz Hayashi vs Koji Kanemoto:

This is probably the best match on this tape. Kaz is fucking KING-SIZED. Kanemoto is in complete "All non-New Japan Wrestlers Suck And I Hate Them All" mode and these two go at it. Kaz gets to the Kanemoto point of stiffness and insanity of bumptaking to make it a great Kanemoto match. Koji kills Kaz with a toprope Belly to Belly Suplex; Kaz answers with a Shockeresque Toprope Tope which he follows with a Flying Cross Body press into a Dragon Suplex into a Crippler Crossface. After Koji hits the ropes, Kaz does the SWANK Moonsault into a Crippler Crossface. This "New Ways To Really Piss Off Benoit" stuff by Hayashi is just WAAAY

too much fun. Benoit is gonna crush his tiny skull. OH WAIT! Kanemoto beat him to it by reversing a Hayashi Top Turnbuckle Rana into a Powerbomb with Kaz getting too much rotation and landing with all his own weight and all of Kanemoto's weight SQUARELY ON HIS NECK! I guess it isn't a true Top O The Super Junior Tourney without at least ONE life-threatening bump caused by Koji overreaching his surly grasp on the toprope. Koji Moonsaults the corpse but Rigor Mortis sets in at the two count. Koji lets Kaz go ice his ruined vertebrae with a Tiger Suplex for the win. HEY! Howabouta Rematch! But way longer!

The big things I noticed is that Kaz looks great and should stay in New Japan nine months out of the year and kill time in the US three months a year; Fukuda is this years Tajiri but better, Takaiwa is practically in the six-man with Nishimura and Hashimoto against Muta, Chono and Tensan already and I can't figure out what they did with all the Felino matches. And HEY! Lyger is STILL the best wrestler on earth. YOU WANT ALLLLLLLLLLL THIS.

!@!@!@!@ NEW JAPAN TV-6/3/98-IWGP Tag Tournament
(byREV RAY)

Kojima/Nakanishi vs Ohara/Goto:

I never really noticed it before, but Nakanishi's getting training tips from Scott Steiner, getting plenty of vitamin S. Opens with the Dogs hitting a Hart Attack on Kojima. Kojima tags and Nakanishi does a spot where he has one guy up in the rack and he kicks away the partner who's trying to make the save while keeping his partner up in the rack. Kojima hits the stone cold chair... ah, the damn most over used move in wrestling to set up the lariat which puts away Goto.... I think. Sorry, it's the Freedom Dogs, I just can't pay too close attention.

Kensuke Sasaki/ Kazou Yamazaki vs Big Titan/ Micheal Wallstreet:

The Ding-Dongs missed their flight, so New Japan subbed IRS and Razor Ramon Dos. Good God! This was the best team they could come up with? Hell, Hashimoto and a broom would have been better. Titan does a cool pumphandle throw where Yamazaki lands on his face. Kazou catches a flying lariat and turns it into a wakigatame. Kazou and the ruiner of all GAEA angles with a lariat into a German suplex. Post match, Kazou is practically barfing in the locker room. Even the suck factor was too high for him to take.

Kojima/ Manabu Nakanishi vs Tenryu/ Koshinaka:

This was pretty cool. I don't know why it seems like people on the net are down on Kojima. I mean, the guy's got charisma, he doesn't outright suck like Tanny Mouse and he's not afraid to get his nose broken by Tenryu. The heat for this match is real good. Kojima really wants a peice of the old bastard Tenryu for busting up his nose a while back. He wants him so bad that he and Nakanishi argue about who gets to start the match until they both decide that there's plenty of Tenryu ass to kick and just bum rush him at the bell. They get Kosh out of the way and go chop crazy on the old bastard and then kill him good with the sandwich lariat. Nakanishi goes into a giant swing which actually looked good. Shiro does his knee/butt strikes to Kojima who returns the favor. Tenryu brings on the stiffness with some chops, which Kojima sells like he's been

shot. Tenryu comes in and starts punching and kicking Kojima right in the face like in their prior match until Nakanishi runs in and busts him in the puss. Tenryu suplexes Nakanishi out to the floor, when he gets back in, he kills him with a lariat. Kojima saves Nakanishi and yells at him in an effort to get him fired up. The great part about it is that you can tell Tenryu is just loving getting stiff on the young punks. He's rubbing his hands in anticipation of putting the hurt on these guys before a few of his shots. Manabu gets put on the top rope, Tenryu gives him a running chop, then climbs the buckles and gives an a sort of pull 'em up chop sequence and knocks him off the top with his old man enzugiri which just ain't stiff. Kojima eventually gets tagged, he and Kosh no sell a bunch of each others shots until Kojima drops him with a lariat. Through out, the match Tenryu makes saves and draws boos from the fans. Tenryu and Kosh stuff bomb Nakanishi for a two, Kosh eliminates Kojima as Tenryu wins with a powerbomb. This was a good match. The heat was there, Kojima was all emotional and fired up, Tenryu was just a stiff bastard. There was also some cool spots where Koshinaka and Tenryu came up with some blocks for the lariat intensive duo which worked as well.

Choshyu Jr./ Kazou Yamazaki v. Masa Hiro Chono/ Yoshihiro Tenzan:

Early on, Sasaki and Yamazaki work over Tenzan. Kazou totally no sells a low blow and hits a german suplex. Wallstreet, Hiro and Titan interfere on the floor and a few of the NJPW guys try to hold them off (Yasuda and I think Iizuka). Chono works on Kazou for a bit with low blows and the STF. Kazou escapes a Mountain Bomb attempt, but Kazou slips out and turns it into a wakigatame. Sasaki tags in and goes into Choshyu mode. Chono saves Tenzan from the Scorpion, but Kazou tries to set him up for the German Suplex following the RikiLariatoJr., but Chono escapes and Kensuke kills Kazou, who plays dead for a while. This leads to a 2 on one with the nWo boys working over Sasaki's leg until for a bit but ultimately put him away with 2 Yakuza kicks. Eh. Post match the nWo and NJPW factions go at it with Chono and Sasaki having a pull apart on the floor.

An Eh show. The opening matches weren't anything really special, but I got a kick out of the continuation of the Kojima/Tenryu rivalry.

\$\$\$\$\$% LUCHA LOONIES 5-(10/97 ANAHEIM-12/19/97 TIJUANA) in FABULOUS BARNETTVISION.
(ByDEAN RASMUSSEN)

I love this series of tapes. Smartly done with truly inspired camera work- nothing cutesy but always WAY too close for anyone to hide, these are all raw, dirty and unrelenting. Welcome to the Hideous and Beautiful Truth of Lucha Libre. Bob Barnett on the West Coast and our fantabulous pally Tim Noel- who shoots everything he can on the East Coast involving the OMEGA axis and Mid-Atlantic Juniors to the north- both have the best Handhelds available because their's totally annihilates everybody else's Oeuvre De Surveillance Camera. They show us the action and that's what the people pony up the money for. Hey! How about everyone else following suit. Wrestling handhelds should look like this- NOT someone's daughter's dance recital tape.

Vampiro/ Chilango vs Poison/ Misterioso:

A Lucha Libre match tells a story. Some are elaborate and moralistic. Some are simple and violent. Some kinda ramble like a drunk friend from college- like this one. It kinda goes on forever and is always good enough for you not to hate it. The focus is that Poison and Vampiro are trying to kill each other and that's aplenty enough for me to justify the length of time it takes for them to get around to busting each other up. Vampiro looks pretty sharp in this so the beginning of his WCW stint is being greeted with undue optimism from these quarters. Poison I'm thinking I may REALLY dig if I see him a few more times. He has the usual real youthful lucha indestructible insanity common in most youngsters who practice the sacred Lucha arts, but mixed in with a real hard edge- from what I could tell from the bunch I saw of him in this match- he does a basic young flying rudo shtickt but looks like he got his nouveau lucha garbage league chops by skipping the usual ECW tapes and going right to the W*ING garbage mainline- you know, that whole matter-of-fact way of taking horrible bumps as opposed the ECW-influence of making a big deal out taking a Fat Ass chair shot to the head (like Poison takes from Vampiro at the beginning of this.) Think of a talented Dragon Winger. Chilango was quite good as the basic tecnico flyer- more on the nifty side than the spectacular side- but that may have had more to do with it being at a swapmeet in Anaheim and not Arena Mexico. Misterioso is eternally Misterioso.

Psicosis vs Parka:

I was told this was booked nine ways to Thursday, but Lucha can be booked to the hilt and still not suck because it's Lucha and there is a place for screwiness because it's got such a face/heel set-up- so screwiness is a means to an end, instead of an excuse for one bloated nWo fatboy not have to job to another nWo bloated fatboy. The only time Lucha screwiness REALLY doesn't work is when Konan tries to go all ECW with Lucha and the screwiness becomes screwiness for the sake of screwiness; Konan does it because he thinks ECW is really cool and they have lots of run-ins and angles and surprise finishes so they should OBVIOUSLY do the same. Of course, ECW isn't Lucha Libre and the Luchadores that Konan used in Promo Azteca didn't need the booking that the august wrestlers of ECW need to get through a match (notice how clean and run-in free Eddy/Malenko and Candito/Storm was)- herein lies the possible problem. The upside is that LaParka and Psicosis are so frickin AWESOME so they SHOULD be able to overcome Konan's bizarre urge to turn it into a Dudleys-Match-Booked-By-Numbers match. Psicosis really is a Great, Great luchadore now. He takes the first caida by the teeth and totally kicks its ass into gear by bumping for... Hell... NINE. He starts with the LaParka armdrag through the rope, heads into the totally too goofy not to totally rule Double Pete Rose Slide to NOWHERE- as they both land on their heads. They hit the mat and hit the double stalemate in a none-to-smooth little sequence. Psicosis works on LaParka's knee after a Halloween RUN-IN assists Psic in busting up his knee in a worked fashion- just like everybody's most lovable shthead Goldberg would later do in a legitimate fashion- so they Heyman the first transition, which isn't that promising, but Psic takes the first fall by kicking LaParka in the head really hard and then hitting his top rope Guillotine leg drop. Psicosis is still kicking LaParka's ass all over the second fall and LaParka is selling like a king. EVIL REF tactics start abaiting the LaParka comeback and we all know how much that Great Idea In Wrestling really blows the beefdart.

Mountains of booking later the REF-BUMPed ref can't make the count on the Rolling Sentoned Psicosis and the GOOD REF RUNS-IN and gets rid of the EVIL REF and LaParka schoolboys Psicosis for the second caida. Hmmm... I was deeply in fear at this point as this had become quite WWFish in it's goofy run-ins and pointless Added Extra Booking. I mean shit, It's fricking LaParka and frickin Psicosis. Who the hell needs idiot ref antics to garner heat and decide the course of the match? Yikes. The third caida starts the actual great part of the match and they start with the Psicosis Flying Throught the Second Third Ropes Directly Into The Ringpost At 700 Miles Per Hour Spot which rules the golldamn world. LaParka rekills the youngster with a Twisting Tope and LaParka is firmly on the offense beating the crap out of the young insane punk by powerbombing him through two chairs as they take the fight to the people. Idiot Van Dam spots with the chair lead to a couple of nearfalls that lead into GOD's LARGEST TOPE by Psicosis and they go botch some sort of submission. Psicosis goes for another top rope legdrop and LaParka dropkicks him right in the area so they go right into botching two RUN-IN assists that leads to double RUN-IN foules for a nearfall. They do the Sabu Makes His Opponent Sit On The Chair But LaParka Moves and Psicosis Dies spot and we're back on track maybe? Well, LaParka hits a powerbomb and then pulls Psic up on the three and Psic wins and I say WHAT THE FUCK?@?@? Was Konan completely immersing his head up his ass to book this like this? I've seen LaParka drag a four star match out of the incredibly mediocre Misterioso. I've seen Psicosis hang with El Hijo del Frickin Santo. They don't need all this crap taking up huge wads of the match. Even if Konan has a Heyman complex, he should know that Heyman didn't base Eddy Guerrero vs Dean Malenko on Jeff Jones refereeing it so that Eddy had to fight against Jones to get to Malenko, which was the basic story that this match dictated. When you got the workers in the ring, you let them work; when you got lesser workers in the ring and they need a hand, trot out El Tirantes and the ilk- that's the concept that works when ECW is booked right. I guess Konan never figured that out. God, when two wrestlers the calibre of Psicosis and LaParka can't save a match from the horrors of an idiot booker, you know your booker is an proverbial Ole Anderson in the making. Welcome to Konan's Dusty tendencies in complete fruition.

Rey Misterio Jr vs Misterioso - Mask vs Mask:

Not a normal Rey Misterio Jr match at all really, but more of a Santo/Casas late-90's style brawl which worked for me. Rey can have neato highflying matches anytime, How often do you see him beating somebody's ass? This was fun. Misterioso was one-half of one of the best tagteams ever, but that was more because Volador ruled the frickin world so much, and not so much because Misterioso is that good. This type of match is his strong point- heavy brawling mixed with some light highflying and attempts at lots of blood and- HELL- when your mask is gonna be on a little shrimp's wall- even he is your nephew- for fifty years, ya might as well get a match that will make you look the best. AAANNNNYYYWWWAAAYYY, this match starts off as it finishes with these two throwing each other into the guardrail, the ringpost, the seats, etc. Rey drops the skirt and that's the signal to wrestle. He's kidding, of course and drives Misterioso's head through a chair. This is getting fun! Rey takes the first fall in a very short span with a springboard legdrop. The second fall is all psychology laden as Misterioso starts ripping up Rey's hideous knee. Misterioso wanders from the knee but Rey brings him back to it by selling it so much since Rey has the best psychology of any of the WCW luchadores. Misteriosos does

the SWANK Flair Shinbreakers DIRECTLY ON THE MAT and it looked hurty as a mutha. THEN. LET THE BLADING. BEGIN. Misterioso goes back to the knee and Barnett goes directly to close-ups of Rey trying to find a main vein. Misterioso takes the second fall with a cretinous Lucha submission. But it was a cretin Lucha submission on Rey's bad knee so this is Japanese as all living fudge. Misterioso says, "Hey, since I'm losing my mask to you and you're my sangre and you're about to get knee surgery, how about if I beat the living dogcrap out of you?" Rey says, "Sure!" Misterioso then drags Rey's scrawny ass all over the arena and bounces him off everything and into everything. Misterio gets on the offensive mid-Arena and does the worlds largest plancha off this landing onto Unkie Misterioso and then they take it back to the ring for some tres swank nearfall sequences that lead to Rey's final pre-surgery highflying as he hits his supercool Springboard Senton to the floor. Misteriosos gets back on the big O with a dropkick counter to Rey's SBHurricanrana which he follows up with a gourdbuster, a powerbomb and a brainbuster and then a superplex. Rey is dead! How will he survive? Well, Misterioso misses a REALLY crappy moonsault so Misterioso foules Rey and nearfalls keep coming until Misterioso hits a chokeslam after the worst ref bump I can remember and when Misterioso revives the ref to count the pin after the chokeslam, Rey hits his SBHurricanrana and the mask is a comin off. Konan finds referees to be the key to all finishes, it seems, but this was a pretty cool match anyway. Very offbeat for a Misterio match, but it was cool to see that he can go pretty highspot free for a long period of time and still be interesting.

Konan/ Negro Casas/Rey Misterio Sr vs El Hijo del Santo/ Damien/ Villano V:

What the hell is Rey Misterio Sr wearing? This is a decent little Lucha brawl but not nearly as good as it would be as straight Lucha. The first caida is a fulblown ECW-style brawl that develops after they flirt with Lucha armdrags, headscissors and such for a minute- with Santo looking sharp as ever. Konan, Casas and Misterio are super-rudos in this and Konan is doing his Sandman impersonation, except Konan can actually work on occasion. They hit Team Santo with all kindsa stuff and get the first caida and then Santo and the boys win the second caida in just as quick a time with a roll-up by Santo on Misterio and a supercool submission (Indian Deathlock Front Facelock Combo hold) on Casas by Villano V. The third fall and the meat of the action starts off unpromising as Konan and crew do every rudo thing in the Cien Caras playbook to beat the hell out of Santo and pull his mask off and shit, but Santo and Casas start heating it up on the mat and then everything is flying through the air as Santo and Misterio both hit a Fat Ass tope each. After that they kinda slap Santo around and pin him with a superweak on-the-mat Doomsday Device. Hmmmmmm. Postmatch they kick the heck out of Santo some more and take his mask off and Psicosis comes in stomps on him and they beat up Santo some more. There are some nice things in this match but it's pretty unremarkable overall. I dunno. Not enough lucha for my taste- especially considering how awesome the whole Santo feuds involved in this- and on the periphery of this- kicked such major ass. This match seemed pretty much an excuse for the angle at the end. Hmmmmm.

@#@@#@# ALL JAPAN TV-6/14/98
(byPHIL SCHNEIDER)

Satoru Asako/ Yoshinobu Kanemura vs Super Delfin/ Gran Naniwa:

The Michinoku Pro boys make their debut against the mediocre Asako and the svelt rookie Kanemaru. I would have liked to see Delfin and Naniwa attempt to wrestle the All Japan style but they basically wrestled a Michinoku Pro match, except Asako and Kanemaru ain't Dick Togo or Men's Teiho, hell they're not even Yakashiji and Tiger Mask IV. Kanemaru has new hair that makes him look less like Shiga, and does one cool move where he dives over the top rope and grabs Super Delfin's head and drives his body into the ring apron. Naniwa looked better then he has since returning from his broken leg. They have the worlds most unspectacular highspot train, two mediocre planchas, two mediocre pescadas. Asako pins Naniwa with a sucky Michinoku Driver. Blah.

Satoru Asako vs Mauneukea Mossman:

This was Mossman's last match as Jr. Heavyweight champion before he moved up to the Heavyweights. He wrestled it against Satoru Asako, who I have seen a zillion matches with in the last two weeks, and God help me if his pedestrian offense isn't on my damn TV screen again. Asako does a basic batch of Junior Heavyweight offense, you've got a mid range top rope rana, mid- range headscissor, mid range swinging DDT etc. . Nothing he does stands out in any way from anyone else, no twist, no extra stiffness, no speed, nada to make him any different. Mossman sells most of the match, and they do kick it up for a nice nearfalls sequence, with Asako hitting a running Liger bomb, Mossman hitting his toprope reverse DDT, and setting Asako up for the Hawaiian Crusher (kind of like Mark Mero's TKO, if it broke your jaw). Asako reverses the first attempt into an armdrag but gets kicked in the face and dropped with the Hawaiian Crusher for the win. Pretty good match especially for Asako. It kind of sucks that Mossman just forfeited the belt instead of jobbing it to DAISUKE IKEDA FOR CHRIST SAKE, but I am excited to see Mossman against the big 5.

ALL JAPAN WOMEN (8/82-10/82)-
(byDEAN RASMUSSEN)

LOREFICE sent me a billion of these a while ago and I've gone through them watching stuff here and there but I've not watched and reviewed these yet so here's where I start. So there you go. Yep.

Rimi Yokota vs Peggy Lee:

Peggy Lee could work pretty well back when I RAN by the Flock of Seagulls were tearing up the charts. Ahhhh...1982. I was going steady with a gymnast with a Karman Ghia and MTV finally arrived on our cable system; going to Virginia Beach and listening to Iron Maiden really loud to impress chicks...ahhh, memoriesss..... Oh, anyways, Rimi Yokota is Jaguar Yokota and she frickin ruled, rules and will rule for as long as she feels like it. Lee does a great Southern heel schickt which is cool and appropriate from someone who looked like she was one of the beloved lunch ladies at Oscar Smith High School in Chesapeake, VA in 1982. Except they were all nice and would give us extra tater tots. Peggy Lee would be more of the "Honey, I ain't got all day. Do ya want carrots and raisins or stewed squash?" type. She's tough as nails though and isn't

afraid to take a large bunch of rudo bumps to make the Future Jaguar look even better than she normally would. I guess this was the last few years of American women still being able to find work because it was at the tail end of Women's wrestling in America. Hell, she could work and Judy Martin is on this tape and she could work and it's a disgrace that American Women don't have a chance to break into the business- with it being at it's peak in the US- without grotesque silicone sacs and crappy dance routines.

Devil Masami/ Tarantula vs Mimi Hagiwara/ Yukari Omori:

Okay. Mimi Hagiwara is just AWESOME. She can really work in that Jaguar Yokota throwback to seventies hard-style US Pro kinda way and she looks JUST like circa-1980 Pat Benatar but with an even bigger eating disorder. Tarantula is ANOTHER in the Jaguar style as it's becoming apparent that AJW was truly truly great as a distinctive wrestling style long before Toyota, Kyoko, the Morenos and the ilk made it so over-the-top highspot intensive. This is what Jaguar and Chigusa are trying to recapture- hard, stiff, mat-based, psychologically-sound, heated pro-style wrestling matches and that's what these are. It's just so psychologically precise in such an offhand way from beginning to end that one can feel the direct links on back to Clara Mortensen on up. It's just all freaked out. Devil Masami is only 45ish in this and she's pretty good as an oversized monster heel, but with Dump Matsumoto around, she should have probably also worked on being a more proficient worker. That's being nitpicky because she and Tarantula are really effective at being totally UNCOOL to the mindboggling So 80's It's Tripendicular Mimi Hagiwara and her Ethel Mertzlike partner Yukari Omori. Plus Devil ain't afraid to take some highgrade Reagan-era bumps and do a true Large as Nance Leiberman-style Tope so I got no REAL beef with the Future Superheel at this point in her game. Postmatch they show Mimi singing one of her big hits in the ring, but it's not a Mimi Fronts The Bluehearts And Sings A Punk Version Of "Hell Is For Children" type of thing, or Mimi as a lost member of Shonen Knife singing a new wave version of "Shadows of the Night," or even Mimi as the angry older sister of Loudness doing a prototypical speedmetal version of "Heartbreaker", instead it's a basic Miami Sound Machine version of salsa/international Sade-esque disco type number that still ruled it because Sade's German Suplex really sucked and Mimi's really stomped ass.

Yukari Omori vs Judy Martin:

Golly, Judy Martin is a better version of Peggy Lee because she's a better worker, a bigger bump-taker and TRULY scary Southern heel in the vane of the women who were always at Be-Lo's Supermarket when I was child- smacking their hateful youngsters upside the head as they were buying a box of eclairs, a 64 ounce Boss of TAB and a Soap Opera Digest. So Judy Martin takes me to a more innocent time in my life. This match was pretty great as the bastard American uses every dirty trick in the book and cheats a whole bunch with the assistance her evil bastard American friend. They give Omori the business, but good- but lovable, slightly-potato-like Omori finally starts beating Martin's redneck ass as if Martin was Gary Numan at a Molly Hatchet concert- after Martin's queen of all rednecks friend Wendy Richter accidently hits Martin in the head with a chair. This was pretty choice. The ending is irritatingly 1980's All Japan Men intensive.

Jaguar Yokota vs Wendi Richter:

Hey! Jaguar is really great. Wendi isn't afraid to be behind the 1982 curb by breaking out the Carter Administration-styled Jackie Fargo Memphis heel stalling and cheating and stuff and- anyway- ALL of it is overshadowed by the future Rock-n-wrestlin-connectionite sporting the most GARGANTUAN hairstyle this side of Louis XIV. Jaguar sells her assorted bearhugs and backbreakers and stuff for a large majority of the match and then says, "Dig The New Breed, Farrah."- and starts flying all around her American counterpart. Wendi goes totally Memphis by selling a Jaguar pile-driver like Austin Idol in 1979. Jaguar pins the remains and gets the WWWA belt. Wendi sells all weird in places and they botch a few things but Jaguar is Jaguar and Wendi wasn't horrible at all.

Devil Masami /Tarantula vs. Mimi Hagiwara/ Jumbo Hori:

This match fuckin RULED! This was so the precursor of the total mayhem that would ensue with the rise of Dump and the crew as this broke down to Tarantula and Devil using nightsticks and chains and stuff and then Mimi and Jumbo freak out and start beating the living hell out of everyone with Mimi REALLY kicking the ref's scrawny male hinder. HEY HEY! It's official! Tarantula was the real-deal. She and Mimi go all to hell in the fast running of the ring kinda way before and after the chaos ensued. Jumbo Hori was quite the total Ass-stomper and I think I need to go and watch a whole lot of her matches. Devil and Tarantula are a lot cooler in this match because Devil and Jumbo pummel each other into oblivion in an early 80's battle of the titans and Mimi and Tarantula supply the hyperactive workrate. Mimi was great. Get all this.

&*~&*~&*~&* ALL JAPAN WOMEN '91
(byREVEREND RAY)

Bat Yoshinaga/Tomoko Watanabe/ Somebody vs Karou Ito/ Something Miori/Somebody
Takahashi :

I have no idea who the third was on Bat's team and I'm guessing at Takahashi being on Ito's team. It's 91, I don't most of these people, deal. This match sort of happens. Tomoko is pretty much the punching bag for her team as the other partner I think has one segment in the ring. Not really much of note going on, except Takahashi giving Bat a face crusher off the apron. Eventually, Miori puts Tomoko on her shoulders and Takahashi gives her a face crusher off the top that looked pretty good, Tomoko got killed pretty good. Takahashi whipped Tomoko into the Ito hip attack for the pin. Eh. Nothing really to write about.

Mima Shimoda/Yumiko Hotta/Saki Hasegawa vs Los Morenos/ Debbie Malenko:

Shimoda has on her bad 70's sci fi space stewardess outfit on. Morenos/Malenko jump at the bell, the other team reverses it, but then get caught in a triple victory roll spot. Hotta drops Ester with a kick to the head which she bounces up from. So you know off the bat, she's gonna pay for it later. I absolutely love this match for one segment and one segment alone. After selling a bunch of Ester's lucha stuff earlier, Hotta decides she has had enough and then just starts absolutely murdering her with stiff kicks. It's truly great as she's pounding Ester and Ester is doing everthing in her power to crawl out of the ring and escape the ass whipping of ass whippings. Of course, she hasn't had enough of beating on Ester, so she throws Cynthia

intentionally into her corner so she can tag Ester and Hotta can give her a bunch of a face first tilt-a-whirl slams and overhead face first powerbombs. Debbie throws in some truly hurty kneebars where she's practically got Hasegawa's leg in her armpit. Hotta wins it with a Tiger Driver that looked more like an underhook piledriver which was good. Pretty good, I liked the Hotta murder segment, but I've seen 5 of the 6 in better matches (Cynthia hasn't impressed me the few times I've seen her) and Saki appears to be working with an injured hand.

Mariko Yoshida v. Takako Inoue:

Takako apparently won Cap'n Crunch's shoulder pads off of Mita, but at least she only wears them on her ringjacket and not her outfit. Yoshida bitch slaps her around early. Inoue gets in control and works over Mariko's knees with assorted kicks and stomps. Yoshida gets in control and hits a handspring elbow, but keeps in mind to sell her leg after doing it. Yoshida controls a bit with assorted mat holds until she does for a handspring elbow again, Takako kicks her off and hits a bridged underhook suplex. They both miss top rope move attempts. Takako hits a truly hellish looking back suplex where she basically has holding Yoshida's thighs and drops her at a nasty angle on her neck. Takako misses a top rope knee drop, Yoshida applies a chinlock while standing on the back of Takako's knees. Takako escapes to the floor, Yoshida goes for a plancha, but misses and catches nothing but floor.... that had to absolutely suck. Takako hits a dive off the apron. Yoshida's leg appears to be hurt, when she gets in the ring, Takako gives her 3 or 4 more of those hellish back suplexes and gets the win with a knee scissors.

Kyoko Inoue vs Toshiyo Yamada:

The crowd chants for Kyoko early. Yamada tries to work her over with kicks early, but Kyoko catches one off the ropes and sort of does a running dragon screw. Kyoko takes it to the mat and gets all lucha mat style on her. Kyoko keeps her in submissions and on the mat for a bit, but does an irish whip and Yamada hits her with a great thrust kick. Yamada kicks her around a bit. She gets caught with Kyoko's spring back elbow, but she ducks a second and puts Kyoko in a leg lock before kicking her some more after the rope breaks. Kyoko tries a counter with a flying ankle scissors that's totally blown, but Yamada sells anyway. Yamada keeps up the onslaught on Kyoko's legs. Kyoko goes for her spring back elbow a third time but Yamada clotheslines her out to the floor. They trade missing spots until Yamada catches Kyoko in the corner and starts elbowing and kicking away on her. She does the 3 point stance, but we forgive her. Yamada goes up for the turn around roundhouse kick but takes a bit long and hits it. After a few misses by Yamada, Kyoko eventually kills her off with a powerbomb. Good match, though sloppy in parts. I dig Yamada quite a bit. I'd say she's got the second best array of kicks of women (by array I mean different number of them, Maekawa being #1). Kyoko advances to the next round of the grand prix.

Aja Kong v. Bison Kimura:

Aja is so talkative in interviews. She's a regular chatterbox. Now, normally I would think Aja would just come out and kill Bison. I know Bison's got a rep, but my impression of Aja is that one match in the WWF where Aja absolutely kills ASARI with the uraken and it's a vision that's burned into my mind and keeps me from ever considering trying to pick a fight with Aja at any time in my life. Bison shows us that Aja's achilles heel is.... her heel. Early on they no sell a

bunch of each other's stuff until Aja beats down Bison and works a headlock until Bison escapes and lays the boots to her. Aja gets back in control and they go back and forth with Aja doing a Chicken wing, into a surfboard into a juji-gatime until Bison escapes and starts working on Aja's leg, first with a half crab and then with brawling in and out of the ring. Bison keeps up the attack and gets off Aja's shoe and throws it into the crowd. She even bites Aja's foot (but she doesn't get 500 bucks from Tiger Ali Singh). Aja sells the attack great and Bison continues to try to get the submission with an assortment of holds, including an STF. Aja fights her off with kicks from the mat, but Bison's basically just taking her apart as Aja can't stand. Aja struggles to get her can to beat on Bison, but her leg gives out after she tries a suplex. Bison works the leg over some more, gets her nightstick and treats Aja like she was Rodney King and Bison was the LAPD. Aja fights it as long as she can, but Bison finally gets her to tap out. It was a smart match, but not necessarily an exciting one unless you've got a thing for ankle holds and lots of them.

Kyoko Inoue vs Manascreami Toyota:

The crowd is split in this one as there are dueling "Toyota" and "Kyoko" chants. Manami does a quick flurry of drop kicks and cross body blocks, Kyoko counters with a boston crab, then a torture rack into a torture rack throw. Kyoko does a bow and arrow type hold, with Toyota's legs trapped in a scorpion deathlock hold. Kyoko keeps going to the mat through out the match and even throws in the ultra goofy pendulum submission hold. Kyoko misses a spring back elbow, Toyota puts her in an abdominal stretch into a rolling cradle before going for a half crab where she's basically sitting on kyoko's head. Toyota does the Mutoh bridging chinlock with the reverse Indian deathlock. Toyota with some nice drop kicks into a German. She misses a top rope splash and Kyoko gets a two following a giant swing. Kyoko gets thrown out to the floor, Toyota hits a nice springboard quebrada to the floor, she goes for another moonsault in ring but Kyoko gives her the coptor toss. Kyoko hits a powerbomb for two and then wins via submission following a forward roll into a Romero special.

Etsuka Mita/Suzuka Minami vs Akira Hokuto/Bull Nakano:

Bull is wearing the Greatful Dead shirt and I can't help but chuckle everytime I imagine Bull with her 50 foot blue hair in a crowd with Deadheads. I can see them all thinking she was an acid flashback or something. Minami has some choice words for I think Akira pre-match. Something I guess about teaming with Bull. Either that or a lecture about making sure never to mess up a promotion in the future because she got knocked up by her no selling future husband. Akira must have ignored her. Hokuto is being a total bitch here, hitting quick piledrivers and pulling her up at the 2 count. I guess we know why Mita turned bad down the road.... Bull and Akira pretty much have their way early with Bull hitting a thunder fire powerbomb, Akira hits a good top rope drop kick. Mita and Minami get a brief bit of double teaming on Akira on the floor, until Bull takes them both out setting up Akira's tope con hilo off the top rope. Bull hits a Northern Lights Suplex and a bridged back suplex for two. Akira gets caught by Mita on the top rope and gets superplexed and then electric chair suplexed. Minami gets two two counts with tiger suplexes. Mimami goes for a powerbomb, but Akira sits out of it, setting up a missed Bull top rope leg drop. Minami and Mita try to double suplex Bull out of the ring, but Bull double suplexes them in. Bull hits a powerbomb, using one hand, does an assissted somersault senton using Akira's

body and Hokuto ends it with a double arm DDT. Akira and Minami do some mic work post match. Pretty much a glorified squash as you didn't ever get the impression that Akira and Bull were ever in trouble during the match.

Kyoko Inoue vs Bison Kimura:

Kimura throws Kyoko out in the crowd and throws a number of chairs on her. Kyoko blades and Bison dominates a whole bunch. Hitting an overhand chops and a spinning chop. Kyoko takes abuse for awhile, slaps Bison around, throws her to the floor, throws her into the seats and hits a piledriver on the floor. Bison works on Kyoko's forehead with "Bison" chops and hits a piledriver followed by a diving headbutt. Bison does a variation on the Tenryu/Kawada "pull 'em up" chop and then hits a blockbuster suplex for a two and follows it up with an STF twice. Bison is in firm control of the match. The blond part of Kyoko's hair is red with blood. Kyoko tries her spring back elbow and misses (gee, that's like the 9th time I've typed that phrase in this review). Kimura hits a spinning chop but her second one is ducked (i don't know if it was an accident or a total miss by Bison). Bison hits a splash that she repositions herself in mid-air for 2. She tries again and misses, Kyoko hits her run up the ropes falling elbow. Kyoko with a german for two followed by a powerbomb for the 3. The finish just sort of came out of no where. Kyoko wins the tournament. Hey, she deserves it. She uses "Panama" as theme music, damn it.

Overall, there was some solid stuff, but nothing really spectacular that you must see... except for Hotta punting Ester, which is amusing, but not enough of a reason to rush out and get this tape.

#####Hey Kids! It's those...%%%%%%%%%%
\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ SINGLES GOING STEADY !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Jumbo Tsuruta vs. Terry Gordy (ALL JAPAN Approximately 1985):

(byPHIL RIPPA) -I will start off by telling you to insert your own Terry Gordy Has Died Twice In The Ring joke since I will not be supplying one. Also this is not the old surly Jumbo that we know now. Anyway, this match is definitely the best of times and the worst of times. You immediately know this is going to be a long match because these two start pacing themselves for about a half an hour match. Fast forward for awhile because you can only watch an armbar for so long even if it is 1985 and Jumbo Tsuruta. You will know when to hit play again. It's when Jumbo blades and hits a BIG pumper. Man o' man, does the plasma flow. And have no fear, Gordy starts bleeding too. Now on another note, it is often amazing how some of the greatest creations in mankind are created by sheer accident. The Microwave. Rubber. The Powerbomb. Yup, the powerbomb gets invented right in this very match as Gordy dumps Jumbo on a botched piledriver attempt. I wonder if Terry has any regrets after seeing Sid's version of the move. Oh well. Well, the match gets pretty great as it heads toward the finish, then is plummets straight to Monday Nitro levels of screwiness. Roughly 25 minutes in, Michael Haynes charges the ring sans Santa outfit and causes Gordy to get DQed. Thanks, P.S. Thanks a lot.

Dan Severn vs Nobohiro Takada 5/2/93 UNITED WRESTLING FRONT INTERNATIONAL:

(byPHIL SCHNEIDER) -This is episode two of Takada carries the stiff. Last issue we watched Takada carry Gary Albright's fat ass to a watchable match, this week it is the basically

incompetent Dan Severn. Severn is actually worse in this style, at this point, than Albright. He is just as lost on the mat, and his suplexes aren't as over or as cool looking. This match was basically Takada teeing off on Severn, first bruising up his thigh with some nasty kicks, then rocking his dome with a big knee lift. Then there was a real bad mat section, with Severn looking like he wasn't sure what to do. They tried to work a shootstyle match on the mat (i.e. going for submission's) when they would be probably better working straight amateur wrestling which Severn could assumably pull off. That said, this match still had an awesome ending as Takada is just kicking the poo out of our little friend Danny, scoring a knockdown. Severn gets up and is hit with a couple more stiff kicks, but he reverses a high kick into an ankle lock attempt, which Takada then reverses into a cross armbreaker for the tap out. Pretty choice little match, especially for someone as crappy as Severn (and this is 1993 Severn mind you, 1998 Severn is bad enough, but this is when he was green). Takada shows that he can carry damn near anyone.

Brawn The Leprechaun vs. ??? (Sept or Oct 1996) WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: (byPHIL RIPPA) -Out of the goodness of our hearts, Phil and I agreed to index some WCW TV that Dean had made up over the last two years. Now as I questioned Dean's tapes with things like the Faces of Fear vs. Steve & Scott Armstrong and the NWO taking over NASCAR, I stumbled across this. Dean insists that he didn't tape this match. Well here you go. In a prime example of Dusty and Kevin Sullivan hitting the bottle, this addition to the Dungeon of Doom was born. The Leprechaun was Buddy Lee Parker running around in a costume with vampire teeth in his mouth biting everyone. See, being stuck with being a bad traffic cop gimmick wasn't bad enough now the Sarge is doing this. Plus, I don't remember anything about leprechaun being blood thirsty scoundrels but my parents didn't really emphasize our Irish heritage so maybe I missed something. Well the match is a big pile of nothing as Tony, Dusty and Larry mumble about the NWO for awhile never saying the name of this nondescript jobber referring to him as "this guy" on more than one occasion. Match description: Punching, kicking, biting, knee off the top rope, chasing Jimmy Hart, Dusty yelling some version of "biting him".

WE WANT FLAIR

*****A new section, BUT FIRST- an introduction by Phil Schneider*****

The status of Ric Flair has been burning up the dorkscussion on RSPW, Where will he end up? New Horseman? Corporate champion? Sable's sweet boobs? etc.. We here at the Death Valley Driver could give two shits. While there is no doubt that Ric Flair is one of the greatest American wrestlers of all time, he is currently a flabby man-boobied, shell of his former greatness. Hey we got tapes so we can watch The Nature Boy in his glorious prime. We fabulous Phils chime in this week, while Rev. Ray and Doctor Dean handle the task next issue.

"Nature Boy" Buddy Landell vs. "Nature Boy" Ric Flair" (Aired 11/23/90):

(RIPPA) This was a basic example of unfulfilled potential. The "Battle of the Nature Boys" took place on a Saturday morning on the Power Hour as part of the gauntlet series. Flair was the runner. And to put this a little more into context of the time period, along with Arn Anderson,

Flair was feuding with Doom. Well, of course, the crowds completely not into it since the rubes don't understand how cool it is to have Landell and Flair in the ring at the same time. WCW also didn't set anything up, instead offering this meeting by chance. And I know they could have set up a little mini-series between the two because Jim Ross and Paul E. Dangerously were more than happy to delve into why Landell and Flair didn't like each other and how Landell was trying to gain respect. Ross line of the week "Ric Flair is a 6-time world champion. Landell, well, he wishes he was." Immediately, you the viewer, will be drawn into the match as both participants mimic each others moves. Mugging for the camera, running their hands through their hair, wooing and chopping. The match is also memorable because it is not the typical Flair match. There are no Flair Flops, no working on the leg, no figure-four. You read that correctly, NO FIGURE-FOUR. Flair wins with a belly-to-back suplex out of nowhere. How you can have the "Battle of the Nature Boys" and not have a figure-four is beyond me. I'm confused.

Ric Flair vs Jumbo Tsuruta (I dunno, 1985 maybe?) (SCHNEIDER)

Tsuruta is one of the greatest Japanese wrestlers ever, so you knew that this was going to rock it all night long. For some unfathomable reason, Flair comes out to the Knight Rider theme. This was seeped in really great 80's wrestling, no big highspots, roid monsters, table shots, catch phrases, dangerous suplexes, big silicone implanted titties or any of the other deritus of modern wrestling, the was just stiff work, kickass psychology and two of the best wrestlers ever going at it. They do a double arm test of strength sequence which last longer than most Nitro matches. They both end up on their knees, punching each other right in the face. A lot of mat wrestling in the first fall with a great ending. Flair grabs Tsuruta's leg, and Jumbo counters with a nasty enziguri, then the jumping knee, and a sweet back suplex for the pin and the first fall. Flair comes back in the second fall with some Flair offense (big kneedrop, elbow smash, knee breaker, you've seen it before), but not before he gets posted and we get to see the patented Nature Boy blade job, (you know the one where his blood interacts with the peroxide dye in his hair to get that weird fluorescent orange color). Then bizarrely Jumbo gets all highflying, hitting a bodypress, and a top rope dropkick (which in 1985 was like a 450 splash). Jumbo then channels the spirit of Jerry Estrada as he tries another bodypress which Flair ducks, and Jumbo careens over the top rope to the floor with a big Lucha bump (it even had the requisite AAA camera work, as they almost completely miss the bump because the show Flair on the mat instead of Jumbo landing hip first on the concrete.) That was the turning point of the match as Flair goes buckwild on the knee, to set up the figure four. The first figure four gets reversed, Flair slaps on a second but Jumbo won't give up so Flair picks him up and hits a back suplex and a kneebreaker. Now Flair drags him in the middle of the ring, and slaps on a third figure four, Jumbo is too hurt to fight back, he is just trying to hold on, his shoulders hit the mat but gets them up before the three, he is losing strength but right before he passess out the bell rings for the time limit draw (because 1980's All Japan was like WCW Nitro main events, no one ever goes over clean). This was a great ending for this context, both guys keep their belts, both guys stay strong. They also didn't have a stupid superman ending where the face stops selling all his injuries and hit all of his moves. This wasn't the best of Ric Flair, because this is Flair wrestling a classic with Jumbo Tsuruta. Flair's true greatness was in wrestling classics with no talent turds like Lex Luger, Ronnie Garvin or Wahoo McDaniel. That is why he was the best, but, hey, a match with Jumbo Muthafricken Tsuruta ain't bad either. YOU WANT ALL OF DIS.

NEXT WEEK: GAEA! OZ ACADEMY! AKIYAMA VS KOBASHI! LUCHA LUCHA LUCHA!
WHOMP ASS!

All I want is a girl that I- care about or I- Don't want nothing- At all. Well Allright.
-Jonathon Richman And The Modern Lovers